

### **Remarks**

Claims 1-4, 6-26, and 28-31 are pending in the current application. No claims have been amended.

### **Indication of Allowable Subject Matter**

Claims 4, 7-10, 15-19, 21-23, 29 and 30 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but are indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter.

### **35 U.S.C. 102 Rejections**

Claims 1-3 and 6, 11-13, 24-26, 28 and 31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Pekney, U.S. Pat. No. 6,553,510.

Claim 20 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Santin, U.S. Pat. No. 6,847,574.

Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections because the cited references do not disclose or suggest every element of any claim, as the following analysis shows.

### **CLAIM 1**

In response to Applicant's previous arguments that the Pekny reference does not disclose a memory device that detects an electrical characteristic identifying a defect in a memory unit, the detecting performed during an erase operation, the Office Action dated

4/20/06 refers to column 2, lines 35-45 for support. However, here Pekny describes a memory cell failure encountered during an erase operation without further detail.

Encountering a failure during an erase operation is not the same as detecting a failure during an erase operation. Further attention to the details of Pekny reveals that Pekny discloses an erase operation 402 separate from a verify operation 404. (See Pekny, FIG. 4, step 402 “erase” and step 404 “verify.”) Further, Pekny discloses “the memory array block is erased and each memory cell in the block is read to verify that it has been properly erased.” (See Pekny, Col. 4, lines 46-48). Thus, Pekny only detects a failure during reading and verifying operations. Thus, Pekny at least fails to teach “wherein the detecting is performed during an erase operation” as recited in Claim 1.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, Pekny fails to teach the limitations of Claim 1. The rejection of Claim 1 is thus unsupported, and must be withdrawn. Claims 2-3 and 6, 11-12 depend from allowable Claim 1 and are allowable for at least this reason.

#### **CLAIM 14**

The Office Action dated 4/20/06 did not set forth any specific rejections of Claim 14 and is thus assumed allowable. Claims 15-19 depend from allowable Claim 14 and are allowable for at least this reason.

#### **CLAIM 20**

Regarding Claim 20, Santin at least fails to teach “a failure detection unit coupled to the plurality of accessible memory units configured to monitor electrical characteristics

in the plurality of accessible memory units and to detect a electrical characteristic that identifies a defect in one of the plurality of accessible memory units” as recited in Claim 20.

In response to Applicant’s previous arguments, the Office Action dated 4/20/06 asserts that it is reasonable to assume that the match signal is functioning as a comparator to compare certain characteristics of a memory cell to determine whether or not it’s defective. Applicant disagrees with this assertion. As seen in Pekny above, detection is determined by reading and verifying. An assumption cannot be made without the use of hindsight.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, Santin fails to teach the limitations of Claim 20. The rejection of Claim 20 is thus unsupported, and must be withdrawn. Claims 21-23 depend from allowable Claim 20 and are allowable for at least this reason.

#### **CLAIM 24**

For similar reasons as argued with respect to Claim 1 above, with respect to Claim 24, Pekny at least fails to teach “wherein the electrical characteristic is detected during an erase operation” as recited in Claim 24.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, Pekny fails to teach the limitations of Claim 24. The rejection of Claim 24 is thus unsupported, and must be withdrawn. Claims 25-26 and 28-31 depend from allowable Claim 24 and are allowable for at least this reason.

### **Conclusion**

For the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and indication of allowance by the Examiner is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions concerning this application, he or she is requested to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number shown below as soon as possible. If any fee insufficiency or overpayment is found, please charge any insufficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

Intel Corporation

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